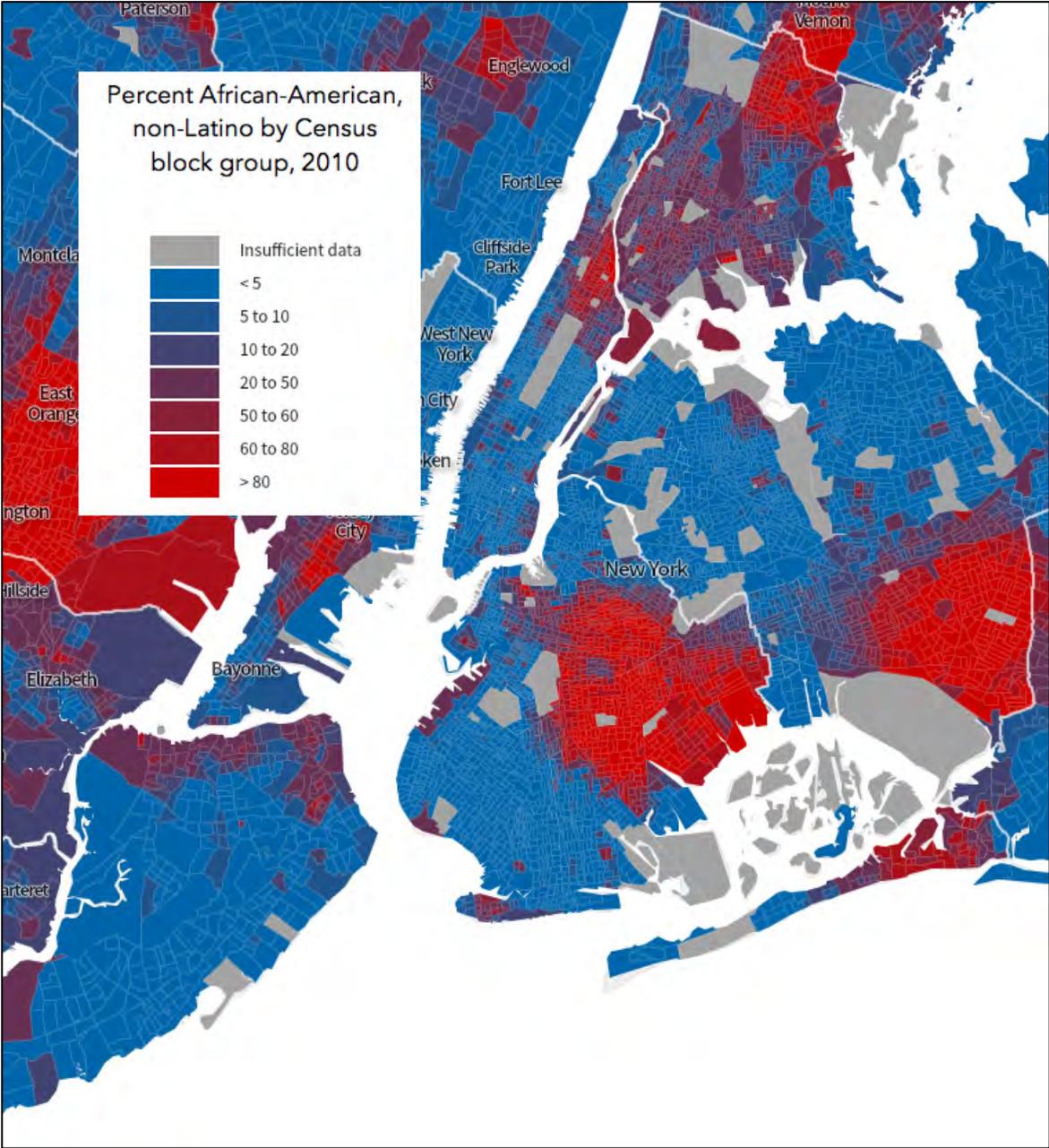


**They're our neighborhoods, too:
Exploding the myth that most affordable housing seekers in
highly segregated New York City insist on staying close to home**



Anti-Discrimination Center
June 2015

Introduction

New York City was and remains one of the most residentially segregated cities in one of the most residentially segregated major metropolitan areas in the United States.¹ The phenomenon of residential segregation is an ugly scar on the City, not only reminding us of a deeply discriminatory past, but also reflecting and encouraging separation between and among New Yorkers today.

Where would African-American and Latino New Yorkers consider living?

How about asking?

Hint: The civil rights principle tells us that there won't be a single answer.

Residential segregation also causes other, profoundly negative, collateral consequences to New York City residents. When you have segregated neighborhoods, you yield segregated schools. Residential segregation is the structure that underlies impaired access to health care and disproportionately high exposure to environmental toxins. Residential segregation permits race and ethnicity to be proxies for choosing how both neighborhoods and individuals are policed.

In New York, neighborhoods with high concentrations of either African-Americans or Latinos are frequently neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty. And such neighborhoods are neighborhoods where the life chances of residents are far less good than those of residents who live elsewhere in the City.

Even though the lived experience of most New Yorkers confirms the continuing existence and impact of racial and ethnic residential separation, there has been remarkably little advocacy in favor of taking action to eliminate this scourge.

Part of the reason for this is that few advocates or politicians have been prepared to actually ask residents of African-American and Latino neighborhoods what range of residential choices, across what geographic areas, they would consider – let alone acknowledge that many residents are not wedded to their residential status quo. **The voices of these African-American and Latino New Yorkers deserve to be heard.**

¹ In 2010, New York was the second-most segregated large city in the United States for both African-Americans and Latinos, as measured by the commonly-used “dissimilarity index.”

Over the course of several months, the Anti-Discrimination Center (ADC) conducted hundreds of field interviews, primarily with African-American New York City residents, but with Latino New York City residents as well. The central question in these interviews was whether an interviewee would consider quality affordable housing located definitively outside of the interviewee’s neighborhood. We framed the inquiry in terms of the boroughs and suburbs of New York City. **It turned out that 69.2 percent of interviewees said “yes” to considering affordable housing opportunities in a borough other than the one in which they were currently living. 60.5 percent of interviewees said “yes” to considering affordable housing opportunities in at least one suburb outside of New York City.**

On many levels, none of this should be surprising. **As one interviewee said, “[I]f it’s a good neighborhood and [a] good price, why not?**

Surprising or not, these data will make it harder to ignore the fact that pro-integration and pro-mobility policies are consistent with the residential choices that a huge number of African-American and Latino New Yorkers appear to be prepared to make, and harder to ignore the fact that policies and practices that perpetuate the segregated status quo – and appeals to keep “our neighborhood” intact “for us” – are unjustifiable.

Trying to get beyond the decades-old impasse between fair housing advocates and community-based advocates:

A two-pronged housing approach that emphasizes both genuine security and genuine mobility.

Recognizing that an enormous amount of work needs to be done to facilitate the crossing of borders for those who may wish to cross them – that, in other words, internal migration must become less restrictive – in no way diminishes the importance of the work that is being done by community-based advocates within individual, currently segregated neighborhoods. This work – like resisting voracious landlords who are trying to force people out of their homes, and organizing to have buildings maintained properly – is essential. These efforts are aptly described as the *security* element of the housing equation.²

² In contrast to some of his predecessors, the current Mayor is taking the issue of housing security seriously, funding a significant increase in anti-harassment legal services.

But the direct and indirect consequences of segregation will not be addressed seriously, and the aspirations of many New Yorkers will not be met, if the *mobility* element of the housing equation continues to be ignored. Incorporating an anti-segregation and genuine-choice agenda means, among other things:

- Adopting policies that do not disfavor New Yorkers who are outsiders to a neighborhood;
- Pursuing policies that affirmatively focus on bringing affordability to neighborhoods of opportunity, both within the City and in the surrounding suburbs;
- Implementing housing counseling and housing development policies that understand that real empowerment means providing both of the following:
 - Genuine opportunity to stay in place for those who so desire; and
 - Sufficient information about out-of-neighborhood housing alternatives so that an informed choice can be made between and among the stay-in-place option and the moving-to-a-new-neighborhood options;
- Accepting the reality that residential patterns for most all of what are now African-American and Latino neighborhoods were formed not by choice but as a function of active and aggressive discrimination; and
- Committing to the idea that all neighborhoods must now belong to *all* of us.

Study Scope and Limitations

We should begin with an explanation of what this study was not. It was not a “scientific survey” with a formal survey instrument and respondent selection randomized by computer or otherwise. As such, we do not (and users should not) make a claim that our results are the final word from a statistical point of view (the familiar +/- 3.5 percent, or the like).

What we did do was to conduct nearly 800 field interviews that were yielded from more than 2,300 approaches to individuals in generally high-activity locations, frequently outside a subway station (like Flatbush Avenue / Brooklyn College, the

terminal stop of the Nos. 2 and 5 trains, at “the Junction” of Flatbush and Nostrand Avenues) or a bus stop (like the Atlantic Avenue / Barclays Center stop on the B45).

We conducted these field interviews principally in the period from November 2014 through April 2015. We made follow-up telephone calls to try to clarify as many responses as possible in the period from March 2015 through May 2015.

We approached potential interviewees and told them that ADC, a not-for-profit, had questions about affordable housing opportunities. We pursued interviews with willing participants unless the person indicated at the outset of the interview that he or she was not a New York City resident or had no interest in affordable housing, either now or in the future.

We excluded interviews with individuals for a variety of reasons, such as excluding those who turned out not to be New York City residents, those as to which we believed there were potential reliability problems, and the (very few) interviews during which it became highly likely that the interviewee was neither African-American nor Latino. **After those exclusions, we wound up with a universe of interviewees numbering 669.**

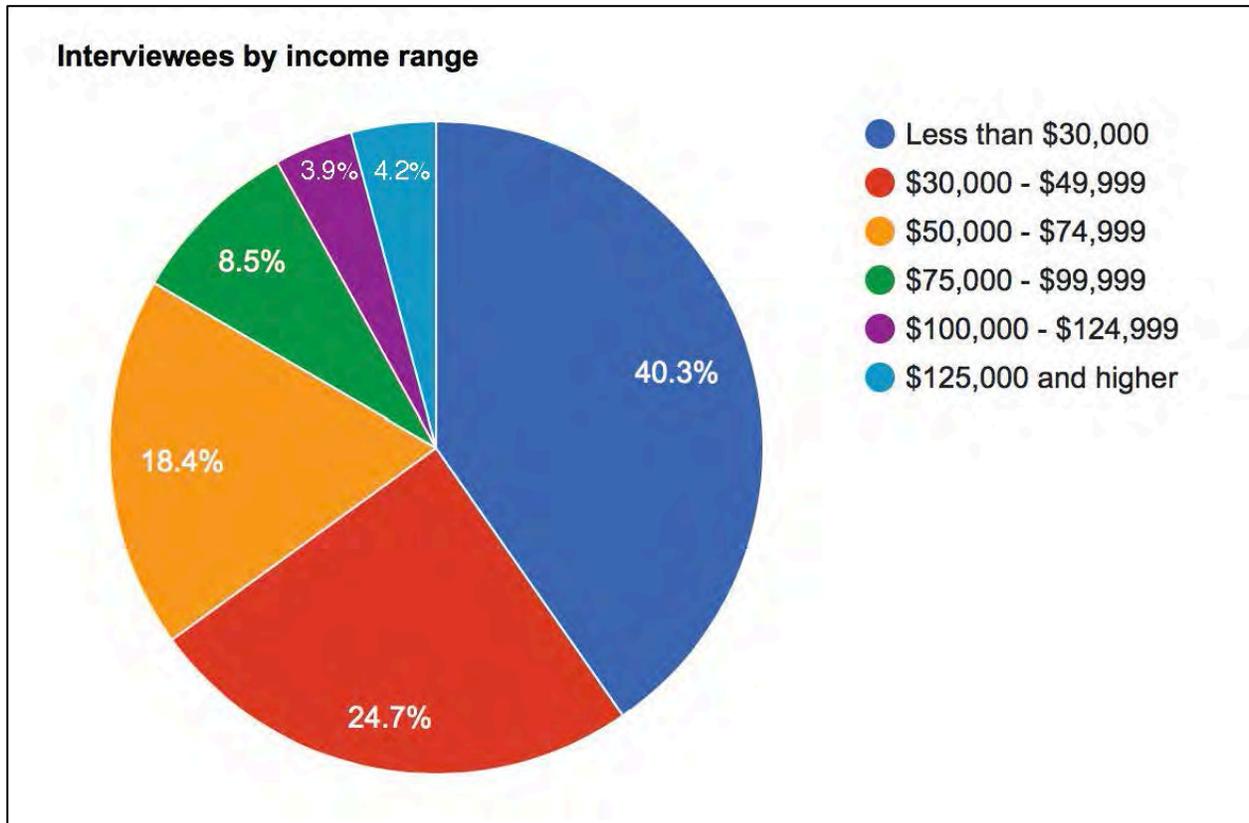
Most of these field interviews were conducted in Brooklyn (66.7 percent) or Queens (27.0 percent). 6.3 percent were conducted in Manhattan.

Most of these field interviews were with African-American New Yorkers (83.4 percent); the remaining 16.6 percent were with Latino New Yorkers.

In asking people about areas in which they would consider, we framed the potential housing opportunities in those areas as ones that would represent quality affordable housing units, in good neighborhoods, with good transportation access. As we did not provide definitions of those terms, individual interviewees would have had their own interpretations (some, for example, explicitly associated “good neighborhoods” with ample amenities or good infrastructure or a low rate of crime).³

³ Although not all interviewees were presented with the “good transportation” or similar phrasing (“near transportation”), most were; it is thus prudent to interpret the study results as having built in a “good transportation” assumption.

Interviewees were asked for (and more than 95 percent provided) household income (within defined ranges). Of those who provided the information, the income distribution is provided on the following page.



Interviewees appear to have represented a broad range of household sizes. In the approximately one-quarter of interviewees for whom such data was available, about 65 percent are households of two or more people, with at least 35 percent having had three household members or more.

Many respondents were open to both rental and ownership housing. In approximately the first half of interviews, we asked what type of housing opportunity interviewees would “prefer.” 34.0 percent of those who responded said rental; 35.3 percent said ownership; and 30.7 percent indicate that they had no preference. In the second half of the interviews, we asked what type of housing interviewees would consider. Approximately 34.9 percent said only rental; 12.8 percent said only ownership; and 52.3 percent said both.

The interviews all tried to explore the same issues, but not all interviewees provided all information sought (income or address, for example). The questioning about

locational interest sometimes began with a broader proposition than one specific borough or suburb (for example, “another borough like Manhattan or Queens” or a place “like Long Island”). As such, the questioning did not necessarily proceed to the point where we could obtain information sufficiently reliable to us at the individual borough or suburb level to use for all of our various analyses.

In all decisions we made, we erred on the side of excluding data of questionable reliability, and we were also more conservative in accepting for use responses that were potentially favorable to considering multiple affordable housing locations than we were in accepting “no” responses.

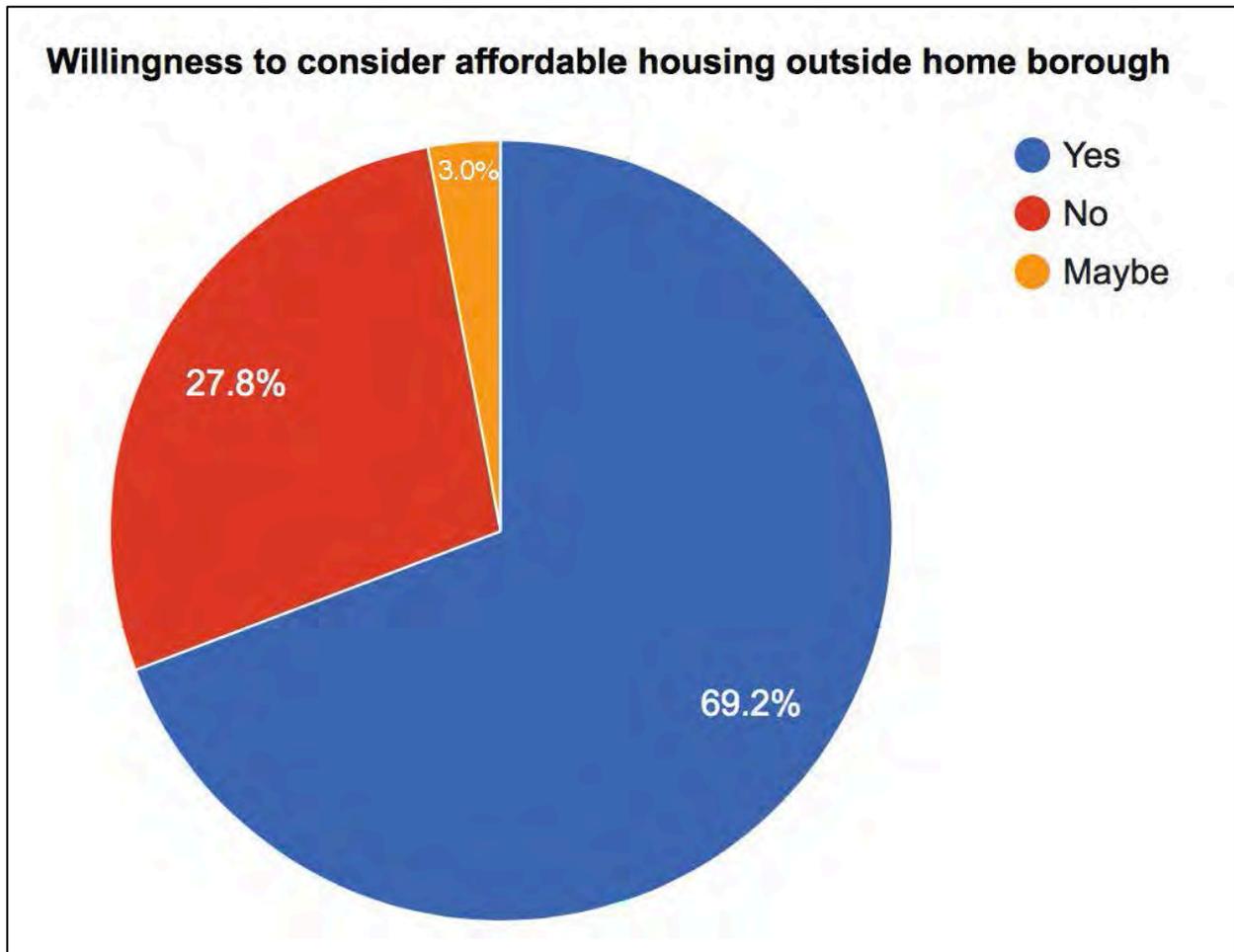
One important caution about interpreting the study results: this study was performed in the absence of housing counseling. As such, it is highly likely that many interviewees were not fully aware of some or all of the benefits of living in neighborhoods of opportunity located in a borough different from their home borough or located in a suburb. It is also highly likely that many interviewees were not fully aware of the various ways available to adapt to a routine different from the one with which they were familiar (whether that had to do with commuting or otherwise). These facts also point clearly in the direction of our results *understating* how many people would be interested in widely dispersed affordable housing.

Note that race and ethnicity of interviewees was determined in most cases not by interviewee self-identification, but by ADC’s interviewer.

Study Results

I. Willingness to consider affordable housing in at least one borough other than the borough in which interviewee resided.

72.2 percent of 669 interviewees said “yes” or “maybe” to considering affordable housing opportunities in another borough, the overwhelming majority of whom were in the “yes” category.



As shown in the chart above, little more than a quarter of the interviewees (27.8 percent) were definitely *unwilling* to consider affordable housing in other boroughs. Unsurprisingly, some of these interviewees explained their views by referencing ties of church, friendship, family, or work. Note, also, most other interviewees were not *rejecting* their home boroughs; instead, they were only including one or more other boroughs among the affordable housing options they would consider.

That said, it was an extremely strong majority (69.2 percent) of the interviewees – that *would* consider housing in boroughs other than their own. An interviewee from St. Albans, Queens echoed the views of many other interviewees as to locational flexibility: “I don’t care; as long as it’s affordable.” An interviewee from East Flatbush said, “Anything nice and with no crimes in it I would love.” An interviewee from Ditmas Park, Brooklyn expressed her view this way: “If you find me something in Manhattan, I’ll jump tomorrow.”

Some interviewees were particularly pointed in their comments about their current neighborhoods. “I hate my neighborhood,” said a resident of Crown Heights, Brooklyn. “I’d like to hear if there are [other] opportunities.”⁴ Two residents of Jamaica, Queens had crime on their minds. “Peace of mind comes first,” he said. He wanted to get away “from all of this,” he added, gesturing around him. “It’s a bad neighborhood,” said a second Jamaica resident. “Lot[s] of drugs...lots of gangs.”

As large as the cohort of interviewees willing to consider another borough turned out to be, it is important to understand that the study results *still significantly understate interviewee willingness to consider neighborhoods in which they were not living*.

Our questions *did not explore* the individual neighborhood level. Take the interviewee, a resident of Flatbush, who said that, “I just like Brooklyn; only Brooklyn,” and, hence, that was the only borough in which he would consider affordable housing opportunities. Our work picked up, and our results report, the fact that he was unwilling to consider housing in other boroughs. But it is entirely possible that this interviewee would have been amenable to affordable housing that might be offered in Park Slope, Brooklyn Heights, or another Brooklyn neighborhood. That willingness to consider in-borough, out-of-neighborhood housing was not necessarily sought out by our questioning, and does not represent any part of this result. As such, the percentage of interviewees *willing* to consider affordable housing outside of their existing neighborhoods (either in-borough or out-of-borough) was surely *higher* than 69.2 percent. Likewise, the percentage of interviewees *unwilling* to

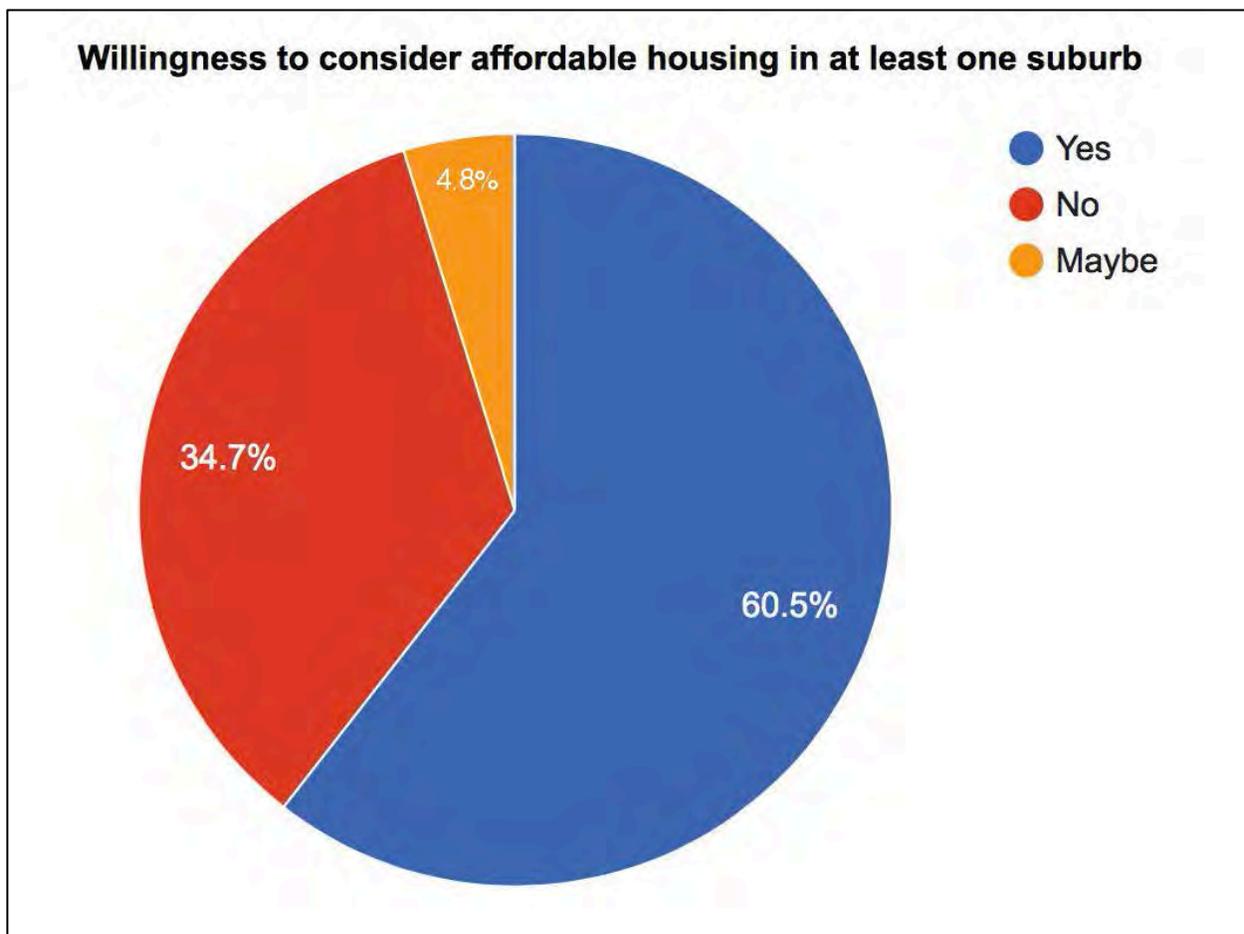
⁴ Compare the Crown Heights resident who said, “Crown Heights is the best neighborhood. People [just] don’t know.” Both interviewees were African-American. It is hard to imagine a more vivid illustration of the folly of assuming that different individuals will make the same housing choices either because they share the same neighborhood or race.

consider affordable housing either in another borough or in another neighborhood of their own borough was surely *lower* than 27.8 percent.

Moreover, an unwillingness to consider another borough may *not* have been, in some cases, a reflection of an affirmation of the desirability of one's current borough, but rather a reflection of a lack of familiarity with other boroughs (for example, the Crown Heights resident who said, "I only know mostly Brooklyn around here"). Unless one nevertheless insists on hypothesizing that none of the interviewees who answered "no" did so from a lack of familiarity with the various choices, this is another factor that suggests that the 27.8 percent "no" figure is overstated.

II. Willingness to consider affordable housing in at least one suburb.

65.3 percent of 669 interviewees said "yes" or "maybe" to considering affordable housing opportunities in at least one of the suburbs included in our study, the overwhelming majority of whom were in the "yes" category.



Though modestly lower than the rate of willingness to consider another borough, the percentage of interviewees who were prepared to consider affordable housing in at least one suburb is quite substantial. Whatever assumptions observers or advocates may have had over time, a strong majority of interviewees were open to at least one suburban possibility.

“Quality goes a long way,” said an interviewee living in a Bushwick and Bedford-Stuyvesant zip code area. “If you can get better quality living outside of New York, why not?” “Yes, as long as it’s a nice community,” said a Flatlands resident. “In a heartbeat,” said an East Flatbush area resident. An interviewee who lived in or around Flushing, Queens said, “Absolutely, who wouldn’t?” The considerations important to this interviewee were “good neighborhood [and] good schools.”

Another resident of Queens said, “If it’s a good neighborhood and a good price, why not? Who wouldn’t?” This resident added: “You don’t want to worry about your mom coming home from the shop...Long Island is good. Good neighborhoods; keep the kids away from...a lot of violence.” The thought was echoed by an East New York resident: “As long as the price is affordable and [it’s] not a high-crime area, because I have kids.”

One particularly striking aspect of this result is that this extensive willingness to consider opportunities that are located outside of New York City occurred in the face of a variety of constraints. One was lack of familiarity with the suburban locations about which ADC asked. As one interviewee from the Morrisania section of the Bronx who was not prepared to say “yes” put it, “I don’t really know what it’s like out there. I’ve never travelled to those places.” A Crown Heights resident rejected all suburbs, saying, “[I] don’t know any place over there.” A woman living in the East Flatbush area likewise rejected all suburbs. She said, “I’m afraid I don’t know those places.”⁵

The proposition that more familiarity with a location can foster greater willingness to consider that location makes intuitive sense, and was illustrated by several respondents who explicitly linked their willingness to consider a suburban location to something that they learned from friends or family in the area. A Harlem resident was

⁵ This comment was actually made not only in connection with the suburbs, but also with respect to the other boroughs of New York City, all of which she would not consider.

open to considering housing in Nassau County for just that reason: "I have a friend who lives on Long Island, and it's really nice and quiet."

"My aunt had a house in Connecticut," said a Fort Greene resident who said he would consider affordable housing in that state. "I'm a woodsy kind of guy." Another Brooklyn resident explained her willingness to consider Long Island on the basis of the fact that, "I've been working there for 21 years."

A second constraint introduced explicitly by a handful of interviewees was the fear of discrimination. A Fort Greene resident, for example, said, "So much is happening in [Nassau County]...I hear about things happening with schools and housing...Bad things, a lot of racial discrimination. And I'm really not in the mood for that."

A third constraint has to do with the availability of transportation. Despite the fact that our questioning asked interviewees to assume that transportation would be available, some interviewees explained their rejection of suburban alternatives in terms of what they either assumed would be an absence of mass transportation,⁶ or their inability to drive.⁷ In addition, some interviewees who were willing to consider suburban locations did peg their willingness to do so on transportation availability: "As long as it's a [good] commute to come to work," said an interviewee who lived deep in Brooklyn. This individual specified that he would require public transportation. "Absolutely, yeah," said another interviewee in connection with suburban options. "As long as it's close to transportation."

If one thing resonated clearly from the interviews, it was that any attempt to ascribe to African-Americans or Latinos a single *locational* desire is entirely misguided. As the civil rights principle would predict, different individuals identified a range of acceptable locations.

⁶ Mass transportation is, in fact, available from many locations in most of the suburban locations identified. In addition, both in the New York area and nationally, most people at most income levels have access to an automobile.

⁷ "I don't drive; I'm scared to drive," said an interviewee. By contrast, another interviewee said that it would be "very good" to live outside of the City. "[It's] a little bit far way, but, with a car, that is not a problem."

Take, for a last example, a Crown Heights interviewee who expressed a desire for living in a “Caribbean atmosphere.” What did he mean by a Caribbean atmosphere? He was explaining his willingness to consider affordable housing in Connecticut: “Most people own houses, have a lot of yards...And it’s cleaner, much cleaner than New York City...I love it. And people there are very friendly.”

III. Drilling down on interest in individual suburbs.

These results are reported for a subset of interviewees constituting slightly more than one-quarter of the entire interviewee pool (178 of 669). These interviewees, each of whom was the subject of more in-depth questioning than the group as a whole, provided us with information about their willingness to consider every single borough and every single suburb in our study.

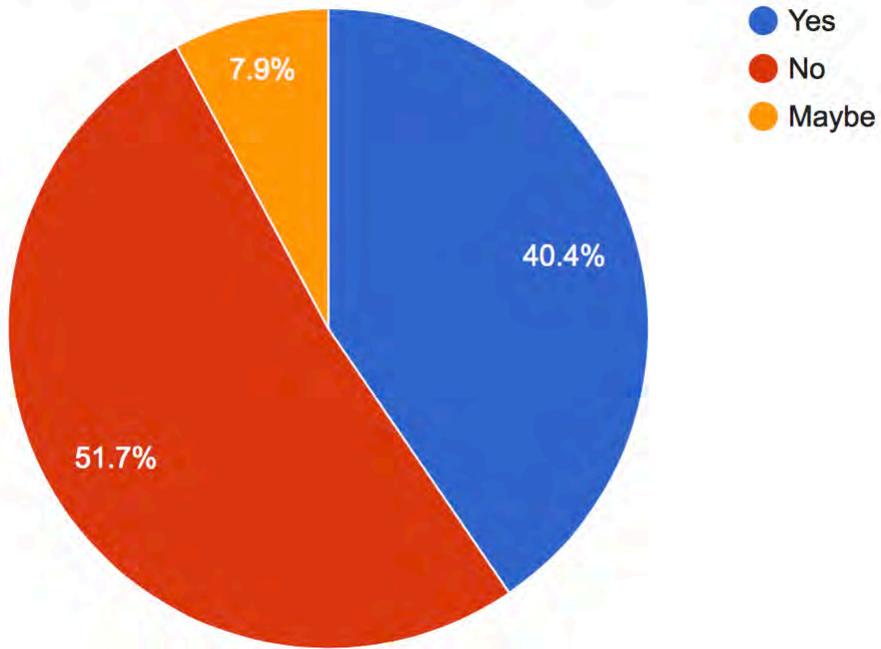
A significant percentage of this subgroup was prepared to consider affordable housing opportunities in Nassau County, New Jersey, Westchester County, Connecticut, or Suffolk County. A much smaller percentage was prepared to consider affordable housing opportunities in Putnam County or Rockland County.

Bear in mind that most interviews were conducted in Brooklyn or Queens. This might mean that more interviewees had greater familiarity with Nassau County (or perhaps New Jersey) than other suburbs (they certainly had greater proximity). It is not unreasonable to suppose that a pool of interviews where more were conducted in Manhattan and the Bronx may have yielded greater interest in Westchester and Connecticut and less interest in Nassau.

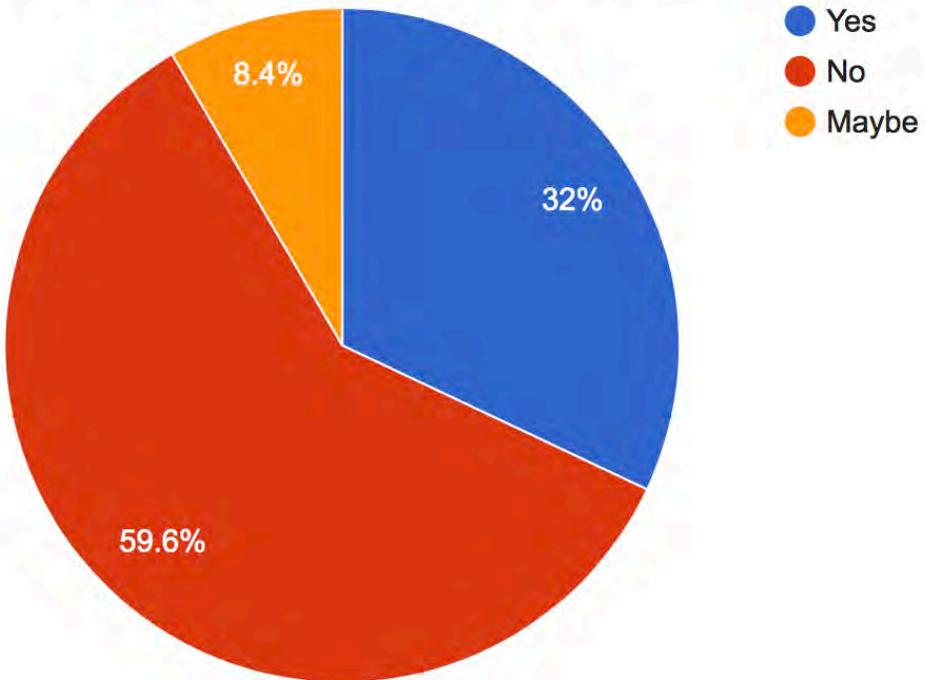
Given the preponderance of interviews that did take place in Brooklyn and Queens, it is especially striking that more than a fifth of interviewees were prepared to consider relocation to Connecticut, and that more than a quarter of interviewees were prepared to consider relocation to Westchester.

Results for Nassau, New Jersey, Westchester, Connecticut, Suffolk, Rockland, and Putnam follow on pages 13 to 16.

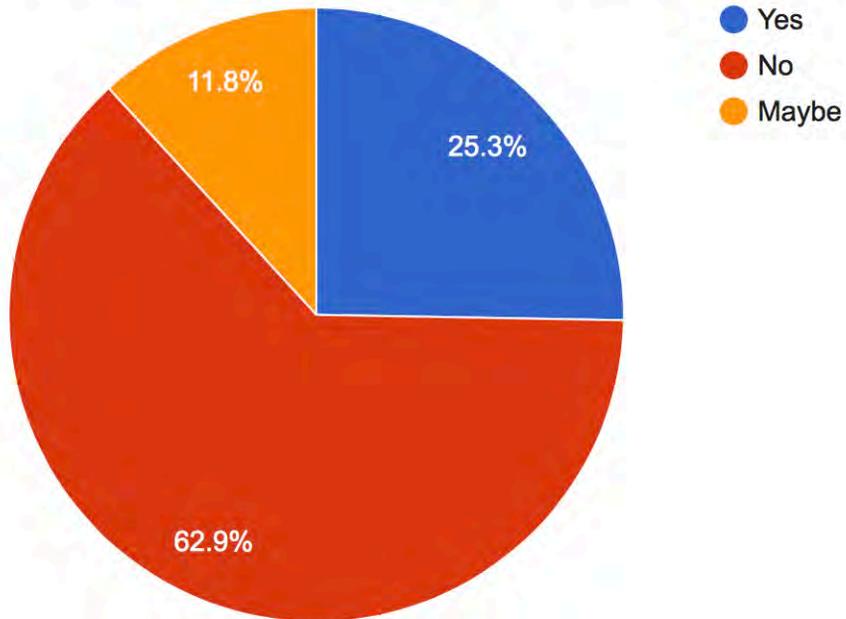
Willingness to consider affordable housing in Nassau County specifically



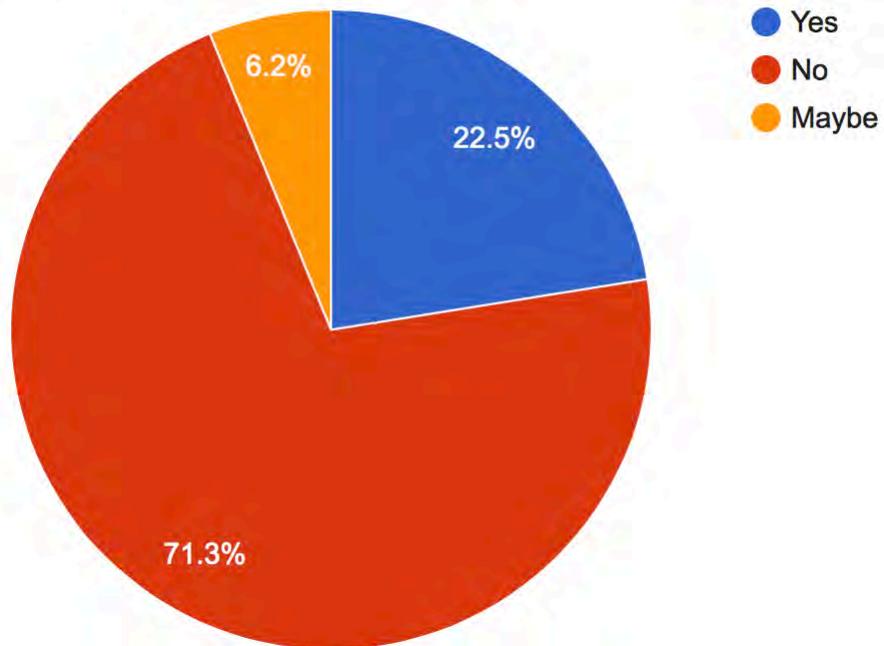
Willingness to consider affordable housing in New Jersey specifically



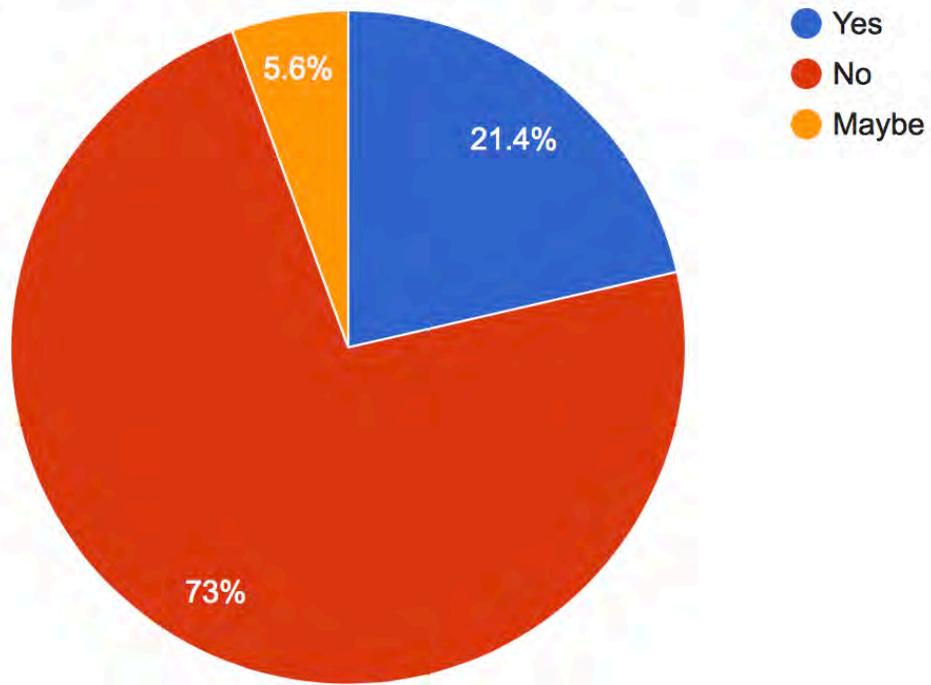
Willingness to consider affordable housing in Westchester County specifically



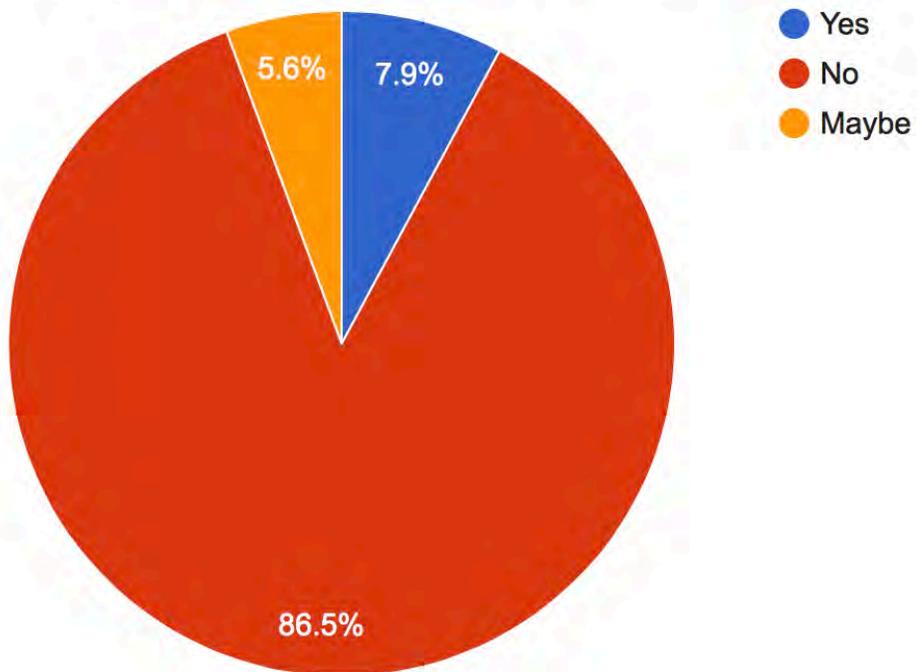
Willingness to consider affordable housing in Connecticut specifically



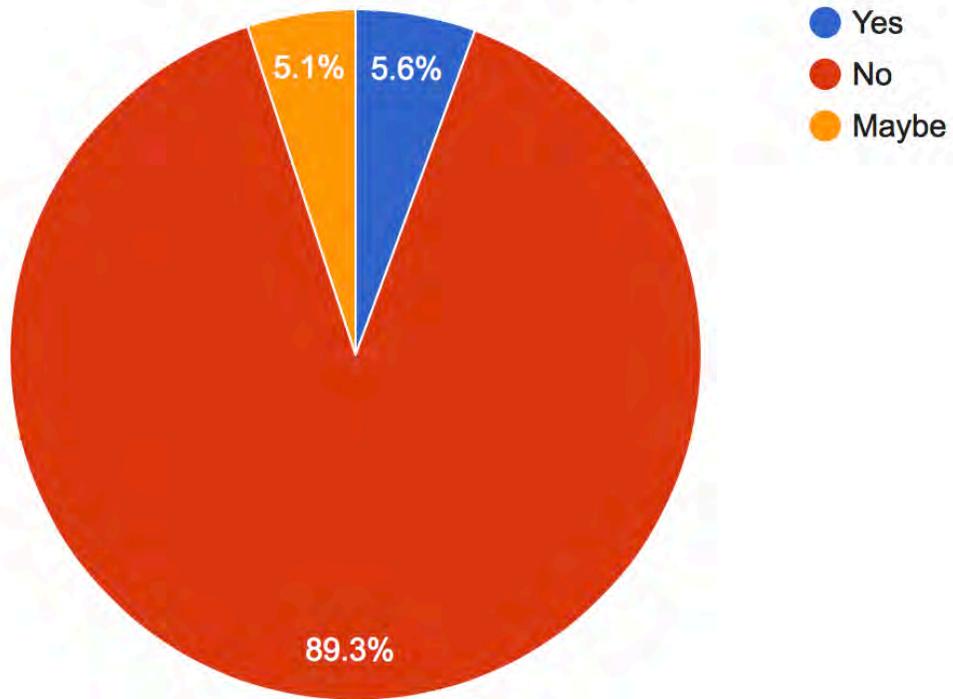
Willingness to consider affordable housing in Suffolk County specifically



Willingness to consider affordable housing in Rockland County specifically

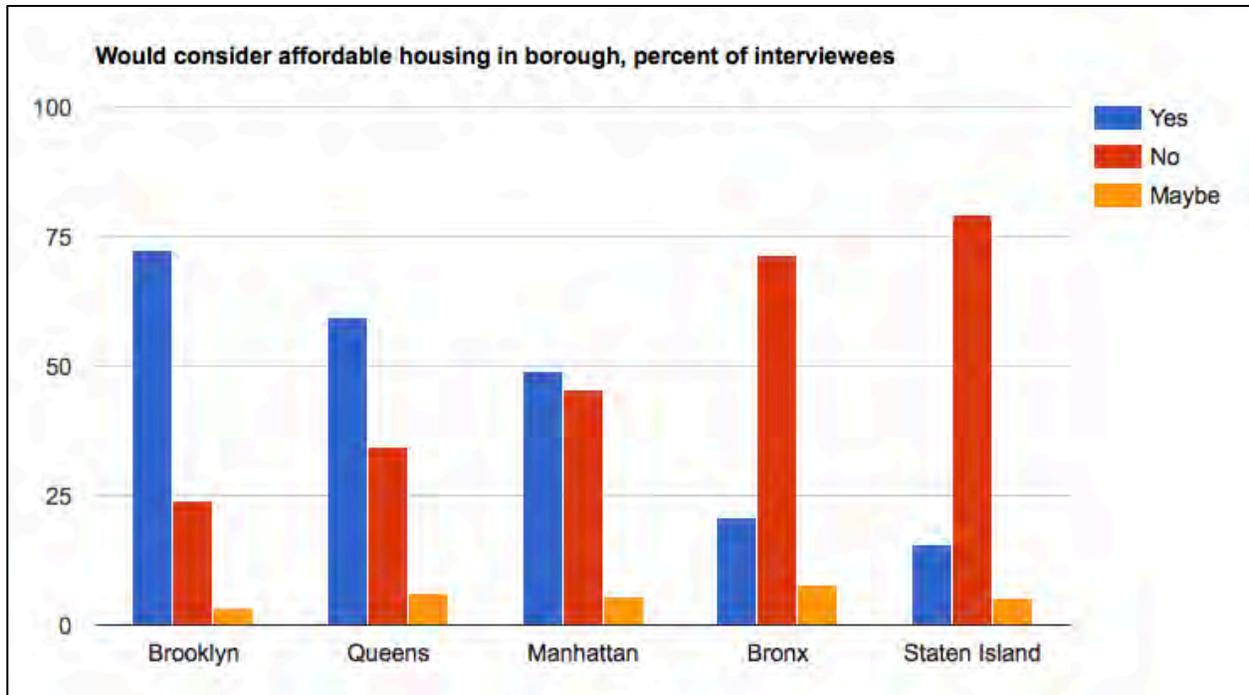


Willingness to consider affordable housing in Putnam County specifically



IV. Drilling down on interest in individual boroughs.

As in Section III, these results are from slightly more than one-quarter of the interviewee pool of 669 (specifically, 178 interviewees). Unlike the data as to suburbs (where none of the interviewees lived), these results do *not* distinguish between an interviewee who was already a resident of the borough in question and an interviewee who was not.



The Bronx and Staten Island fared poorly for (at least) two reasons. First, there were very, very few residents of either borough who were interviewed. Second, it was much more unusual for an interviewee who was willing to consider affordable housing in another borough to pick Staten Island or the Bronx, as opposed to the other boroughs. That is, a resident of Brooklyn was much more likely to identify Queens or Manhattan as a borough where he or she would consider affordable housing than Staten Island or the Bronx. Queens residents were more likely to identify Brooklyn or Manhattan. And Manhattan residents were more likely to identify Brooklyn or Queens.

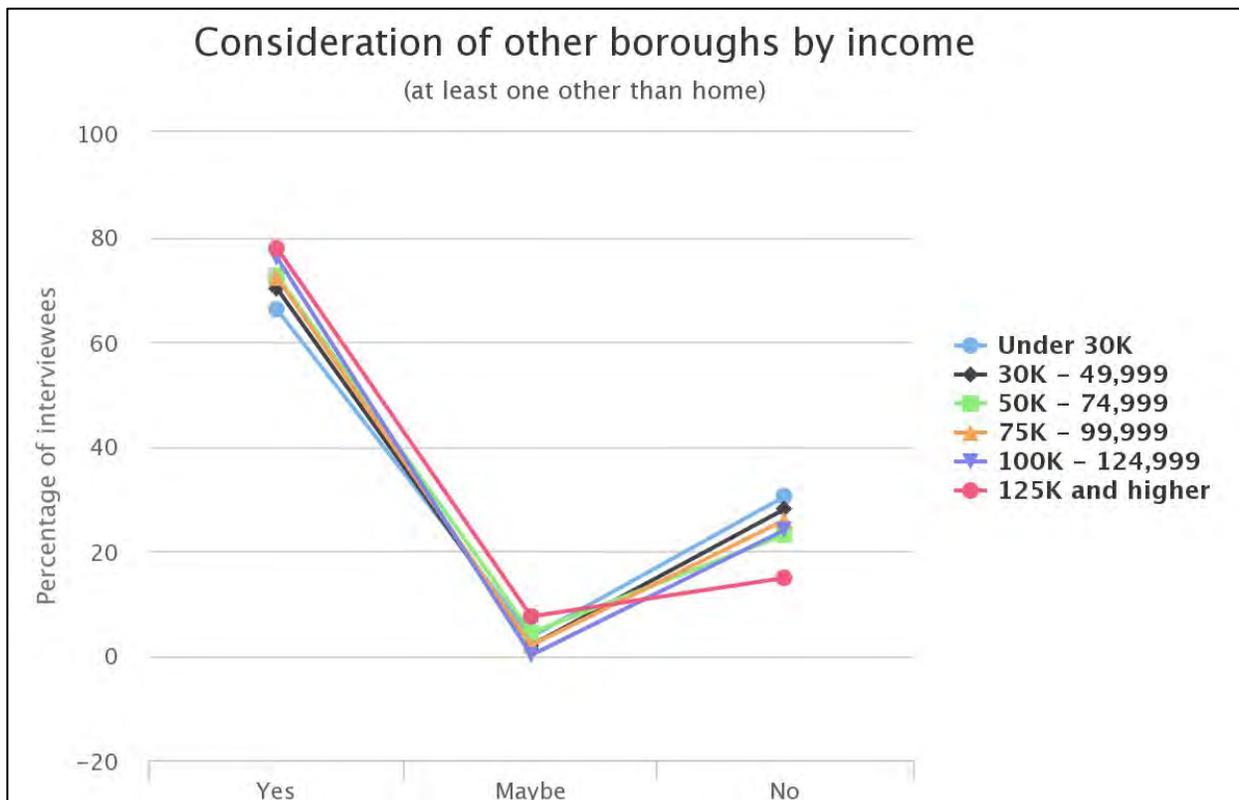
The lack of familiarity with, or stereotyped assumptions about, Staten Island or the Bronx could have dampened an interviewee's willingness to consider either or both boroughs.

Note: Although we report these individual borough results, we believe that the imbalance of interviewees between and among boroughs makes them less useful than other information in the report.

V. To what extent did income affect willingness to consider different locations?

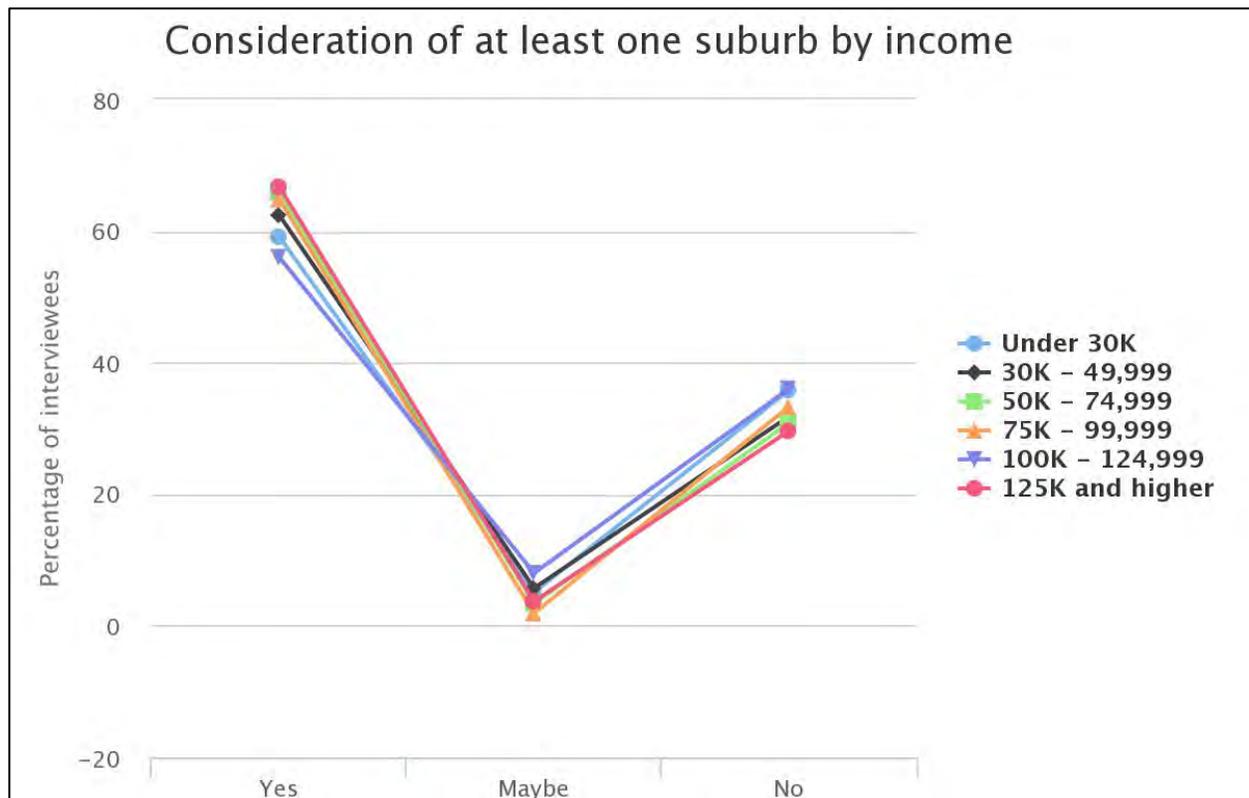
More than 95 percent of the 669 interviewees provided household income data in one of six bands. While the percentage of respondents saying that they would consider a borough other than their own generally went up modestly as income went up, the most notable finding is the relative similarity between and among bands.

In each of the six income bands, there were very substantial percentages of interviewees who would consider affordable housing in a borough other than their own borough.



Note: The size of each income band varied considerably. Almost two-thirds of all the data came from interviewees who had annual household income of either under \$30,000 (40.3 percent) or from \$30,000 to \$49,999 (24.7 percent). The band from

\$50,000 to \$74,999 contributed 18.4 percent of the responses. By contrast, the remaining bands were distinctly smaller: \$75,000 to \$99,999 households represented 8.5 percent of the responses; households from \$100,000 to \$124,999 represented 3.9 percent of the responses; and households that had annual income of \$125,000 or higher represented 4.2 percent of the responses.

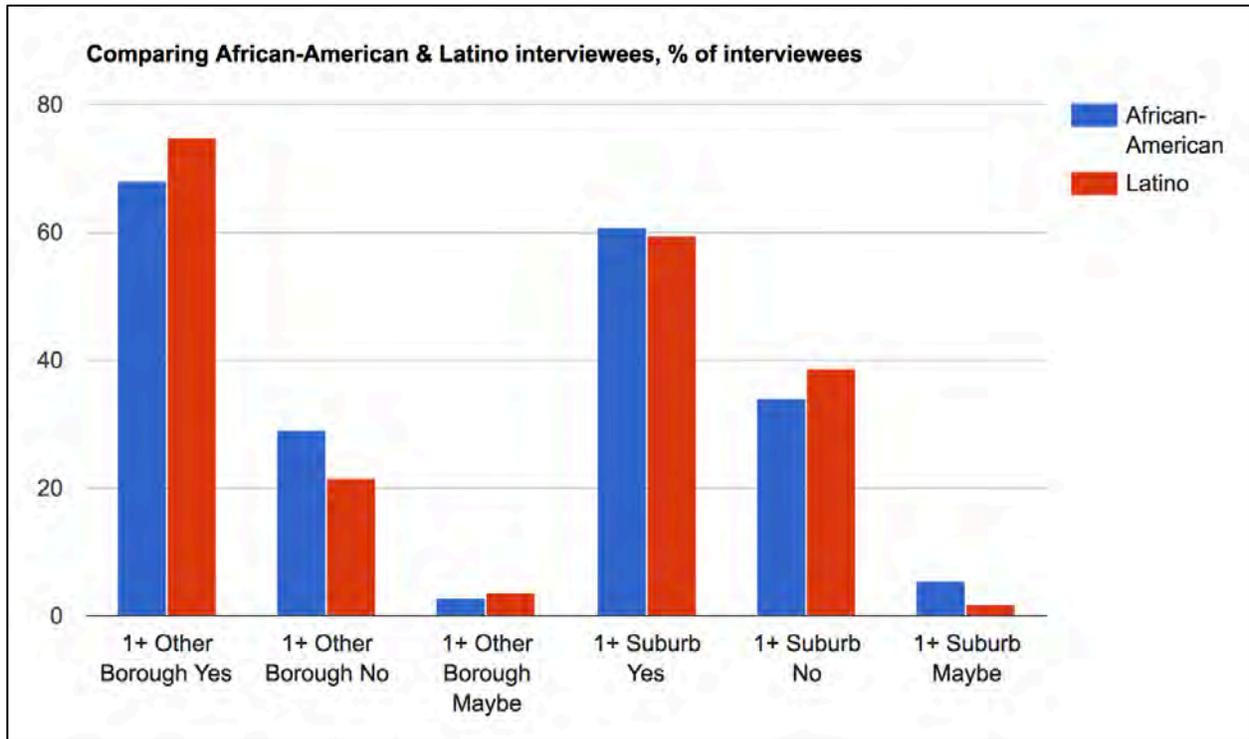


As shown above, there also are substantial percentages of interviewees at all income levels who said they would consider affordable housing in at least one suburb. Those percentages tend to be several points lower at each income band than the percentage of respondents who reported that they would consider affordable housing in a borough other than the one in which they were living. Nevertheless, a clear majority of interviewees from every single income band told us they would consider affordable housing in at least one suburb, and not less than 64 percent in each income band said "yes" or "maybe" to considering such housing.

For example, 62.4 percent of interviewees from households that had annual income of from \$30,000 to \$49,999 said "yes" to considering suburban housing, and another 5.7 percent said "maybe" to considering such housing.

VI. To what extent did race or ethnicity affect the willingness to consider different locations?

Not very much, it seems.



For each group, there was a substantial majority of the interviewees willing to consider affordable housing in at least one borough other than the one in which they were living, and there was a substantial majority willing to consider affordable housing in at least one suburb. For “borough other than one’s own,” the “yes” percentage was 6.7 percent higher for Latino interviewees. For “at least one suburb,” the “yes” percentage was 1.3 percent higher for African-American interviewees.

Conclusions and Observations

The overarching significance of the interviewees' responses is best captured not by precise percentages but in broad strokes:

1. The idea that either African-American or Latino New Yorkers are all (or mostly all) wedded to their current neighborhoods is altogether false; and promoting the idea that either group, as a group, is intent on preserving the status quo is irresponsible.

In developing our questions, we deliberately designed them to make sure that interviewees would understand that the options we were talking about would require a significant change (relocating to another borough or a suburb), not simply a move over a neighborhood line (as from Prospect Heights to Park Slope, or East Harlem to the Upper East Side, or Jamaica to Briarwood). This meant depressing the percentage of interviewees who would be amenable to change.

Nevertheless, a strong majority of the interviewees turned out to be willing to consider affordable housing in at least one borough other than their own; likewise, a strong majority of the interviewees turned out to be willing to consider affordable housing in at least one suburb.

2. The interviewees' responses made clear that policies that fight existing patterns of segregation are consistent with how a strong majority of interviewees would be prepared to meet their affordable housing needs.

This finding is of great importance because the need for affordable housing for City residents (both within the City and in neighboring suburbs) far exceeds the current supply. The decision that has to be made, therefore, is the following: when meeting a portion of the need, does one do so in a way that is segregation-perpetuating or segregation-reducing? The segregation-perpetuating way (for example, preferring "insiders" to "outsiders" in housing lotteries; or excluding affordable housing altogether from neighborhoods of opportunity) might be attractive to some people. But the segregation-reducing approach – offering affordable housing on an equal basis to all income-eligible households and including affordable housing in all jurisdictions and neighborhoods – both deals with historic inequities *and* likely would be satisfactory to many more African-American and Latino individuals from a variety of income strata.

3. New York City's neighbors have even less of an excuse than ever to avoid their obligation to meet their fair share of regional housing need.

Many towns and villages in the New York City suburbs have been and continue to be hostile to the development of affordable housing – especially affordable housing with desegregation potential. County governments have aided and abetted this shirking of responsibility.

Sometimes the excuse has been that outsiders would not be interested in or comfortable living in the suburb. Sometimes the excuse has been that insiders – overwhelming, members of the racial or ethnic group that was historically favored through decades of intentional housing discrimination and segregation – deserve any affordable housing opportunities that are developed.

But this set of interviews makes clear that there *is* willingness among New York City residents to consider suburban options – substantial willingness. And the reasons for that willingness to consider opportunities throughout the region given by some interviewees – safe neighborhoods, good amenities and infrastructure, attractive communities – are exactly the virtues that suburbs advertise themselves as possessing.

Interestingly, trends in recent years show a migration of a portion of suburbanites back to cities. If suburbs opened themselves more to migration from New York City, we would achieve the kind of neighborhood mobility and dynamism that characterize a healthy housing market and a growing region. In time, we would find that an open door policy allowed neighborhoods to develop more along the lines of shared individual and family interests, and less as a function of racial or ethnic divisions.

There is a regional affordable housing crisis and a regional fair housing crisis: all jurisdictions must step up and meet their responsibilities on both fronts.

4. Housing counseling – and, more generally, distribution of information about what different boroughs, towns, and villages throughout the metropolitan area have to offer – is critically important.

Lack of knowledge about housing choices or limiting assumptions about what some of those choices would mean was evident from the responses of many interviewees, including some who based their complete unwillingness to consider alternatives on unfamiliarity with them.

If housing choices were hardwired – you either liked a community or you didn't – lack of information would not be so important. But, of course, these choices – like other consumer choices – are malleable. They depend on information, impression...and on the underlying reality.

Thus, a person might not realize that commuting time from many southern Westchester communities to Midtown Manhattan is less than the commute there from deep in Brooklyn. Or that the commute from some communities on the North Shore of Long Island to Penn Station is less than the commute there from some parts of Queens.

A person may not realize the benefits that his or her child might get from a school with smaller class size.

A person may not appreciate that other neighborhoods (especially neighborhoods of opportunity) are genuinely open to him or her, or that, if problems arise (in the form of discrimination or otherwise), there are means of redress.

Helping people understand choices and the strategies that can be adopted in order to adapt well to a new neighbor is exactly what housing counselors do all the time. And community-based advocates could take on that role – if they are prepared to recognize that: (a) "constituents" are empowered when they are given information and tools to make their own decisions; and (b) a decision to relocate away from a neighborhood does not constitute a "betrayal," just like a New Yorker's decision to enter a neighborhood does not constitute a hostile invasion.

5. Transportation options need to be enhanced to maximize housing choice.

Many interviewees tied their willingness to consider an area to the availability of mass transportation. This means that areas without good mass transportation access need to enhance that access so that they are not (intentionally or unintentionally) unwelcoming to large sectors of the New York area community.

There is another element, too. Transit-oriented development has great potential. But the effect of insisting on transit-oriented development whenever affordable housing is involved is a formula for perpetuating segregation in many areas of the City and in many parts of each of the City's suburbs. The increase in automobile traffic that would be caused by allowing affordable housing to be built in segregated locations

not currently served well by mass transportation would be marginal in relation to the volume of traffic in the metropolitan area overall, and should not be allowed to be an excuse to keep affordable housing with desegregation potential out of traditionally (and currently) exclusionary areas.

6. If you want to know, ask!

ADC has made a modest beginning, but there is much more that obviously needs to be done to explore not only what residential options people would *currently* consider, but also what can be done to reduce the inhibition that some people feel about considering other areas (again, just as one would do with a consumer product other than a neighborhood or town or village).

Part of doing this involves asking questions of others in the development process. During the Bloomberg administration, there were many rezonings to “preserve neighborhood character.” The ability to build multiple-dwelling housing (and therefore the ability to build affordable housing with desegregation potential) in central and southern Staten Island, for example, was severely curtailed. It would be important to find out from for-profit and not-for-profit developers what changes to zoning would now be necessary to allow them to build mixed-income housing that would complement existing housing in lower-density neighborhood in Staten Island and elsewhere in the City, just as it would be important for suburban jurisdictions to pose that question to developers in relation to their extensive single-family zoning.

7. Something is very wrong for the issues of this report to have to be raised in 2015.

That an individual’s race or ethnicity is not a satisfactory proxy for determining what his or her actions, ideas, or choices will be is a lesson that should have been learned 50 years ago, if not 150 years ago. Yet the idea that all doors should be open in all directions is hardly a popular idea. Why not?

First, the fight against residential segregation has *never* been popular in the United States. This is reflected both in the absence of a sustained commitment on any level of government to a comprehensive program of desegregation and in the difficulty that fair housing organizations have in attracting broad support.

Second, the traditional opponents of integration (those in neighborhoods that are highly White, whether wealthy or not) have not had a mass conversion experience.

Third, and of particular salience in New York, most community-based advocates and allied groups are locked in a defensive struggle to provide better services and housing security *within* a single segregated neighborhood. That struggle has meant little attention has been paid to the issue of opening doors in other communities. It has sometimes expressed itself in resistance to those newcomers who seek to be welcomed into the neighborhoods effectively designated after World War II as the limited places within which African Americans and, later, Latinos, were permitted to live.

Fourth, politicians, even if not the direct beneficiaries of local districts that are drawn to exploit racial and ethnic segregation, are loathe to challenge the segregated status quo.

This report makes clear that there are voices of African-Americans and Latinos that have not been heard. Time will tell how many people are prepared to listen.

8. What does it mean to be one community?

One reason that New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's description of New York City as a "Tale of Two Cities" resonated so deeply and widely during the 2013 mayoral campaign is because so many New Yorkers understood that there are neighborhoods of high opportunity and neighborhoods of no opportunity in New York; that the gaps between those neighborhoods are enormous; that so much, in other words, is "determined by zip code"; and that so many of those determinations coincide with race and ethnicity.

We at ADC believe that an interviewee from Harlem summarized what one true community means quite succinctly: "Everybody deserves a chance."

This study was conceived by Lori Bikson, designed and overseen by Craig Gurian, and conducted by Roger D. Maldonado. ADC wishes to thank Maldonado especially. Without his drive, tenaciousness, thoroughness, and ability to speak with a wide range of fellow New Yorkers, this study could never have been brought to a successful conclusion.

Bikson, Gurian, and Maldonado wrote this report.

Cover map courtesy of the premier mapping and demographic team at sociaexplorer.com.

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